

# Writing for PowerPoint or other presentations - I

**Instructions:** You must prepare a presentation incorporating the information contained in the following texts. For each text, prepare one or two lines that can be displayed on a PowerPoint slide summarizing the information in the text. Each PowerPoint line must contain 35 characters or less. Abbreviations are permissible. The first one has been done for you.

**A** 2Q2004 investment profit exceeded  
best estimates by a factor of four

*“During the second quarter of 2004, the profits we earned on investments exceeded our most optimistic expectations by at least a factor of four.”*

**B**

*“Using analysis methods developed in-house, we were able to determine that the current mix of real-estate holdings is far from optimal from a potential-earnings standpoint.”*

**C**

*“Most accidents clearly resulted from a failure in ground-to-air communications, due to poor radio transmission quality.”*

**D**

*“Third-generation electronic games of chance have generated more income for the casino than all other forms of gaming combined.”*

**E**

*“This project was originally scheduled for completion in the fall of 2001, but budget restrictions delayed its beginning until spring of 2002, and it isn’t expected to be completed until late 2005.”*

**F**

*“Primary responsibility for this issue will eventually be assigned to Trevor Smith, but Jane Reardon will fulfill that role while Trevor finishes his assignment in Luxembourg.”*

**G**

*“Marketing objectives for the current fiscal year have been met and surpassed, which is in sharp contrast to the poor performance recorded for fiscal years 2003 and 2002.”*

**H**

*“A new type of sealant (Type 7A) promises to greatly reduce incidents of leakage in the primary and secondary actuator systems on aircraft now leaving the assembly line.”*

**I**

*“Key clients objected to contractual restrictions on early withdrawal and a failure to address these objections on a timely basis caused us to lose at least two such clients over a two-year period.”*

**J**

*“If these trends persist, it will no longer be economically feasible to staff these internal accounting and inventory functions domestically beyond the end of the decade.”*

**K**


*“Five new Class A accounts were signed in 2001; seven in 2002; fifteen in 2003; and twenty-four thus far this year. We expect this trend to continue.”*

**L**


*“More and more communication takes place by e-mail; our IT department feels that an upgrade of the internal e-mail system may become mandatory before the end of this year.”*

**M**


*“Over the past eighteen months, six incidents involving improper tracking of parts shipments have led to a failure to respect contractual obligations for four-hour response time.”*

**N**


*“Optimal use of general-purpose robots (as opposed to special-purpose equipment) is expected to greatly reduce implementation costs for new lines now in the development stages.”*

**O**


*“Legal considerations make it impossible for us to openly discuss the terms negotiated with these clients, but clever advertising copy may be able to allude to them in ways that don’t infringe upon clients’ rights.”*

**P**


*“An explosion in demand in the first trimester of this year overran production capabilities and left us with a six-month backlog that we haven’t even begun to erode.”*

**Q**


*“The television campaign of last April backfired when our competitors successfully made fun of our claims in their advertising, resulting in greater retention for their advertisements than for ours.”*




*“If this problem with orientation of the telescope cannot be resolved, we’ll have to postpone the C group of observations until a new directional module can be built and installed.”*

**S**


*“Of all the options examined thus far, it seems that outsourcing of roles without direct customer contact would provide the greatest savings over the shorter term (one year or less).”*

**T**


*“Passive heatsinks no longer are sufficient to keep processors cool; fans, refrigerators, or some new type of passive material will be necessary for coming generations of processors.”*



*“Nobody expected a takeover attempt this year, and we exhausted a large part of our cash on hand in a successful attempt to fend it off.”*



*“One remaining issue is the division of responsibility between the participating partners; this must be worked out before November 30 at the latest.”*



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*“Taking chances on a market upturn at this point seems too uncertain to be a viable course of action, given our present condition in this sector.”*




*“A follow-up product will be based on the sequel film, and will be released at the same time as the film itself, sometime next summer.”*

**Y**


*“Of all the menu items in our company-owned stores, the chocolate donuts are generating better margins than anything else.”*

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## **Teaching Points**

This exercise is useful for students who are regularly called upon to prepare presentations in English, particularly presentations made with Microsoft PowerPoint software or a similar computer product.

For each item in the exercise, the student must examine the original sentence and summarize that sentence in no more than two lines of no more than 35 characters each. This simulates the constraints that are often imposed by presentations that will be shown on a screen, which require short lines that are visible at a distance.

The sentences in the exercise are complex, often verbose sentences of the type often found in technical documents and formal reports or whitepapers. They are so complex that it is virtually impossible to include all the information they contain in just two lines of a presentation; thus, the student must find the most important idea in each sentence and summarize that, then attempt to include as much additional information as possible without exceeding the line and character limits for the presentation. It's not easy, even for native speakers.